

The President's News Conference With President Vladimir V. Putin of
Russia in Moscow
May 24, 2002

President Bush. President Putin, thank you very much. Laura and I are so grateful for your hospitality and your friendship. It's an historic and hopeful day for Russia and America. It's an historic day for the world as well.

President Putin and I today ended a long chapter of confrontation and opened up an entirely new relationship between our countries. Mr. President, I appreciate your leadership. I appreciate your vision. I appreciate the fact that we've now laid the foundation for not only our governments but future governments to work in a spirit of cooperation and a spirit of trust. That's good. It's good for the people of Russia; it's good for the people of the United States.

President Putin and I have signed a treaty that will substantially reduce our nuclear—strategic nuclear warhead arsenals to the range of 1,700 to 2,200, the lowest level in decades. This treaty liquidates the cold war legacy of nuclear hostility between our countries.

We've also signed a joint declaration of new strategic relationship that charts a course toward greater security, political, and economic cooperation between Russia and the United States. Our nations will continue to cooperate closely in the war against global terror. I understand full well that the people of Russia have suffered at the hands of terrorists, and so have we. And I want to thank President Putin for his understanding of the nature of the new war we face together and his willingness to be determined and steadfast and patient as we pursue this war together.

President Putin and I agree also that the greatest danger in this war is the prospect of terrorists acquiring weapons of mass destruction. Our nations must spare no effort at preventing all forms of proliferation. And

we discussed Iran in this context today. We'll work closely with each other on this very important issue.

Our nations also agree on the importance of a new NATO-Russia Council that will be launched in a few days in Rome. And Mr. President, this council is also a tribute to your leadership and your vision. For decades, Russia and NATO were adversaries. Those days are gone, and that's good. And that's good for the Russian people; it's good for the people of my country; it's good for the people of Europe; and it's good for the people of the world.

Russia and the United States are also determined to work closely on important regional challenges. Together, we will work to rebuild Afghanistan. Together, we will work to improve security in Georgia. We will work to help end fighting and achieve a political settlement in Chechnya.

Russia and the United States are committed to economic cooperation. We have launched a major new energy partnership. Private firms will take the lead in developing and transforming the vast energy reserves of Russia and the Caspian world to markets through multiple pipelines such as the Caspian Pipeline Consortium and Baku-Jihan. And I want to thank you for the cooperation and the willingness to work together on energy and energy security.

Russia is building its market economy, opening new opportunities for both our countries. I'm impressed by the level of entrepreneurial growth here in Russia. It's a significant achievement. Again, it's a testimony to the leadership of Vladimir Putin.

In a while, we're going to meet with Russian and American business leaders to discuss how we can continue fostering good relations and fostering opportunity. We

want Russia to be a part of the world economy. We look forward to one day welcoming Russia as a member of the World Trade Organization. President Putin and I also agree that we'll work to resolve disputed areas of trading, such as poultry or steel, in a spirit of mutual respect and trust.

America welcomes the dramatic improvement in freedoms in Russia since Soviet days, including the new freedoms of Russia's Jewish community. In recognition of these freedoms, I am determined to work with Congress to remove Russia from the Jackson-Vanik amendment. It is time our Congress responded to my request, President Putin's desire, that the Jackson-Vanik amendment be removed pertaining to Russia.

I also discussed with President Putin the important role of free press in building a working democracy. And today we will meet with media entrepreneurs from both countries. It's an issue we discussed before. The President said it makes sense to have a forum where media entrepreneurs can meet and visit. And it's going to take place today. Mr. President, I appreciate that.

I am pleased with our relationship. I am confident that, by working together, we make the world more peaceful. I'm confident that, by working together, we can win the first war of the 21st century, and that is the war coldblooded killers—against coldblooded killers who want to harm nations such as America and Russia. And I'm confident that, when we work together in a spirit of cooperation on all fronts, both our peoples will benefit.

Mr. President, thank you for your hospitality.

President Putin. Distinguished American colleagues, distinguished Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, we've just accomplished the official part of our talks with U.S. President George Bush. Before our distinguished colleagues are the visit in Moscow and in St. Petersburg. But now we can name the major result of our talks—first of all, the logical development

and practical implementation as seen by our agreements reached in Crawford last year. I mean the signature of the treaty between Russia on strategic defensive reductions and, first of all, this document.

It's the statement of our countries to reduce our nuclear arsenals and the joint work for nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction. It's the decision of two states which are particularly responsible for international security and strategic stability. We're on the level of adopting the declaration on new strategic relationship which determines the basic directions in the security and international policy. It will have a positive impact for economic cooperation and development of our relations between the institutions of general public. And together with Mr. President, we discussed especially this aspect, the civil society between the people of our countries. The declaration formulates the principles of our dialog, anti-missile dialog; that is, the transparency and openness and exclusion of potential threats. We confirmed the Genoa agreement on offensive and defensive systems in all their aspects.

A separate issue, the mechanism of NATO-Russia cooperation within the framework of 20, it presumes a new level of joint responsibility and confidence between all its participants. I would like to stress, especially, that is the international novelty. And it happened because of the strengthening of Russian-American relations, including in joint confrontation to international terrorists—struggling with international terrorism. Russians work together with the American people in September the 8th, and we're grateful for sincere feelings of compassion headed by President Bush on behalf of American people because of the recent events in Kaspiysk. The memory of terrorism victims and the responsibility for the security of our people means joint struggle against this evil, as well as the struggle against nazism. The spirit of our cooperation will mean fruitful results even today.

That's why the agenda has very concrete issues of interaction against terrorism on the basis of unique standards against any manifestation of terrorism and extremism. We need close contacts through all agencies and services, including special services. Here we have very positive experience we've accrued over the past years. And we see today—we feel it today during the negotiations. The bilateral working group on Afghanistan has demonstrated its efficiency. And we, Mr. President, would like to transform it on a group to combat terrorism, especially chemical, biological, nuclear terrorism.

Russia and the United States are oriented to build new relations in economic activity. Our businessman mentality is much alike, that their qualities and their joint work is based on free trade and supporting the initiatives. That's why our task is to open new opportunities for business community.

We need to avoid obstacles of the past. Here we mean not only the market status of the Russian economy—and I'm grateful to Mr. President that he has given a very positive signal during our talks. And it does also mean such things as Jackson-Vanik amendment. We have to remove administrative obstacles, which encurls both countries, to cooperate, especially in the high-tech sphere, which determined the economy of the 21st century; that is, the aeronautics, telecommunications, science and technologies, new sources of energy. I would like to focus on energy, especially nuclear energy. We paid much attention to it today. And the large format of our cooperation will be a great element for the global economy on the whole.

I would like to stress, in conclusion, that, of course, not all ideas, not all initiatives, are on paper and in the form of official documents. But a serious move forward in all these issues is quite evident for us. Today, we together counteract global threats and challenges, and we're going to form a stable world order that is within

the interests of our peoples and our countries. And I think it's in the interest of all the civilized human society.

Thank you.

President Bush. Name your agency.

Nuclear Arms Reductions

Q. I have a question for both Presidents, please. If we've truly entered a new era, why do you each need 1,700 nuclear weapons? And President Putin, why does Russia need to continue producing nuclear warheads? And to President Bush, why does the United States need to keep some 2,000 of these weapons in storage, ready for deployment?

President Bush. Yes. First of all, remember where we've come from. We've come from 6,000 to 1,700 in a very quick—or to 1,700 to 2,200 in a very quick period of time. You know, friends really don't need weapons pointed at each other. We both understand that. But it's a realistic assessment of where we've been. And who knows what will happen 10 years from now? Who knows what future Presidents will say and how they react?

If you have a nuclear arsenal, you want to make sure they work. It's—one reason that you keep weapons in storage apart from launchers is for quality control. And the thing I think it's important for you to know, Ron [Ron Fournier, Associated Press], is that we've made tremendous progress from the past. And the treaty is setting a period of time in the rear-view mirror of both countries. And I am not only confident that this is good for world peace; I'm confident this sets the stage for incredible cooperation that we've never had before between our countries.

President Putin. I concur with the assessment given by my colleague, Mr. Bush. And naturally, our position is well known. We are guided by the facts that it's more worthwhile, perhaps, to eliminate a certain part of nuclear potentials. At the same time, I'd like to point out another thing here. Any man who has at least once in

his career dealt with arms, had arms in his hands, at least to hunt or a rifle or whatever, he knows that it's much better, much safer to have it in stock disarmed, disassembled perhaps, rather than to have it in your arms and charged with bullets in it and with your finger on the trigger at the same time. This is a different state of affairs, as it were.

And the fact that we agreed with President Bush regarding such détente, in such manner, this is a serious move ahead to ensure international security, which is a very good sign as regards the relationship between our two countries.

Now, as to why Russia should continue to produce nuclear arms, I'd like to say that this is not our priority. But in addition to Russia and U.S. out there, there are other states who possess nuclear arms. What is more concerning, there are countries who want to acquire weapons of mass destruction. Experts in the area of international security are aware of the fact, and they have been talking a lot about nuclear arms as deterrent.

Moreover, many of them assert—and it is difficult to dispute this fact—they say the existence of the nuclear arms was an impediment, an obstacle which contained the world from large-scale wars over the past decades, let's say. And I think we should take that into consideration while building a new quality of relationship within the two main nuclear states of the world.

We also should pay attention to the whole set of relations currently in the world out there, and we should take into account the prospects of development of the world in the realm of security, bearing in mind those potential threats I've mentioned here.

*Jackson-Vanik Amendment/Russia-U.S.
Economic Relationship*

Q. Mr. Bush, when we can hope that Jackson-Vanik will be rescinded, which currently is very out of place? That's, you know, a remnant of the cold war here. And will the U.S. continue to use it as a lever-

age of applying pressure on Russia and when Russia will finally be recognized as a marketplace country? And what's the prospect of Russia's accession to WTO?

And now to Mr. Putin, Russian President. What's your idea of how U.S. Boeings can help Russian civil aviation?

President Bush. I couldn't make myself clearer during my opening statement about how I feel about Jackson-Vanik—not much action by the Congress of the United States, and I hope they act. The market-based economy is an issue that the President and I talked about. It is a regulatory matter, the responsibility of which resides at the Commerce Department. Secretary Evans and I have to talk about this subject, and we'll have an answer to the President soon.

And in terms of success of Russia ascending into the WTO, it's something that we want. It's in our Nation's interest that Russia be a part of the WTO. And we look forward to working with the President and respective ministers to see that that happens. It's in our interest that that happen. So it's hard for me to predict the timetables on all the issues you mentioned. Those over which I have got direct control will happen relatively quickly.

President Putin. Well, you know, while talking about the whole set of commercial and trade ties between our two countries, today we've mentioned more than once that we are facing somewhat an unusual situation in this area today, which has to do with the fact that while improving relations in disarmament matters, building confidence and so on and so forth, at the same time, we're expanding the whole set of relations in economic area. And naturally, we'll face new problems we never had to deal with before.

The position taken by the U.S. administration and the President is known to us as regards Jackson-Vanik. It's precisely the administration who initiated its rescinding.

And business communities of our two countries, American and Russian business communities, and their interaction together with the interaction of the parliamentary issues, will be able to remove similar problems in automatic manner, I guess.

Now, as regards your specific question on purchase of Boeings, I must say that the best lobbyist of the interests of U.S. companies will be American President standing here, since both Boeings and poultry and other matters very often have been told by my colleagues. People usually say, "Well, it's not on our level, but I must say," and then there will be a lengthy monolog on specific matters.

Anyhow, you've posed a very acute and very specific question. Why it's acute?—Because it's on the agenda—or practical interaction. And it's very specific since it has a bearing to very specific matters. And since it's acute and specific, I'll answer as one should in gentlemen's society, in a very general manner.

First and foremost, our carriers, in my opinion, should be primarily guided towards Russian aircraft producers. Why?—because Russian manufacturers, you know, don't have anywhere to sell their products otherwise, because they are not let anywhere—or with a lot of difficulty. They only can sell it domestically; that's the first thing. And here we can talk about interaction on the market.

Now, the second thing, our carriers, primarily Aeroflot, should be competitive on the market and should have advanced technology in their hands. Therefore, they both have American Boeings today; they also have European Airbus aircraft. And the question has been raised currently on additional purchase, on replacement of old equipment with those foreign aircraft.

Now, I should say, depending on the decision to be taken by economic structures—this is not a political question, mind you. The economic structure should decide on it. A lot will depend on it in regards of the state of our political interaction, of

course. And our American colleagues' proposal today is a little bit costlier than the Europeans' proposal. Had Americans bought our cheap aluminum and steel, then their aircraft would have been cheaper and more competitive, including in our market.

So all of this jointly has been a subject of our discussions with the President here, and our good friend and partner, Secretary of Commerce and economy. And I think that in the course of normalization of trade and commerce relations, all these issues will be addressed in a most mutually advantageous manner.

Iran/Nuclear Nonproliferation

Q. [Inaudible]—state sponsor of terrorism. I wonder because of that, if these Russians sales that you object to continue, does that—this new strategic relationship you're discussing today bump up against what you outlined in your speech to Congress when you said, in the war against terrorism, you're either with the United States or against the United States?

And President Putin, the Bush team says that your sales of nuclear technology and sophisticated military technology to Iran are the world's single biggest proliferation problem right now. Do you agree with that assessment, and did you make any specific promises today in your meeting with President Bush?

President Bush. Well, first, we spent a lot of time on this subject. And as I said yesterday in Germany, I worry about Iran. And I'm confident Vladimir Putin worries about Iran, and that was confirmed today. He understands terrorist threats, just like we understand terrorist threats. And he understands that weapons of mass destruction are dangerous to Russia, just as they are to America. And he's explained that point himself, of course, now that he's standing here.

But we spoke very frankly and honestly about the need to make sure that a non-transparent government run by radical clerics doesn't get their hands on weapons of

mass destruction. It could be harmful to us and harmful to Russia. And the President can speak for himself. And he gave me some assurances that I think will be very comforting for you to listen to. And I'm confident we can work together on this issue. This is in both our countries' mutual interest that we solve this problem.

President Putin. I will confirm what Mr. Bush has just said, and I agree with your evaluation of threats in this regard. Generally speaking, I believe that the problem of nonproliferation is one of the key problems as regards ensuring international security.

Incidentally, this happened to be one of the main motivating and underpinning logical stimuluses to work in Russia-NATO framework together on nonproliferation on nuclear arms.

At the same time, I'd like to point out that cooperation between Iran and Russia is not of a character which would undermine the process on nonproliferation. Our cooperation is exclusively, as regards energy sector, focused on the problems of economic nature. I'd like to point out also that the U.S. has taken a commitment upon themselves to build similar nuclear powerplant in North Korea, similar to Russia.

And in addition to Iran, I think, we also need to think about other countries here. For example, we have some questions concerning development of missile programs in Taiwan, in some other countries where we've been witnessing active work of producing mass destruction weapons and their carriers. All of that should be a subject of our in-depth discussion both bilaterally and in the frameworks of NATO-Russia agreement. That's one of the key issues of the modern times, I believe.

It would seem to me that in order to be efficient, in this sense, like in other areas, we need to address the main task, to upgrade confidence mutually. And today I mentioned to President Bush here that as regards Iran and some other countries, according to our data, the missile programs

of those countries, nuclear programs, are built largely on the basis of the technologies and with the support of the Western companies. We do have such info, and we stand ready to share it with our American partners. So if we pursued that way, not dealing with generalities, then we'll get results with respect to this very complicated and very important for our two countries track.

And the conclusive question—[inaudible].

Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty

Q. Mayak Radio Station. To both Presidents, to what extent the treaty ensures real nuclear parity, and are there conditions that the treaty can be terminated by either side? And how true is the fact that Russia still remains as one of the nuclear targets for nuclear forces? And how does that relate to the announced new strategic relations between our two countries?

President Bush. Well, it is a treaty. This document is a treaty that will be confirmed by the United States Senate and the Duma, hopefully. Secondly, treaties have always had outs; there's nothing new about that. There are conditions of which things may change, and people get out of treaties. That's the way it's been. The Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty had an out; there's nothing new about that. And thirdly, you know, we are going to work to end the—forever end the cold war. And that begins with the statement that Russia's our friend, not our enemy.

And you say "targeting"—I mean, the idea of our weaponry—our military has no aims at Russia. There may be old vestiges in place, but Russia's not an enemy. You don't think about how to deal with Russia the way they used to. Russia is a friend, and that's the new thinking. That's part of what's being codified today.

President Putin. As regards the parity, the parity relationship of sorts, the weight of military potentials and nuclear potential, and so on, so forth, each state would have

its own strategy of development of what you refer to as nuclear deterrent process. But I'd like to assure you that all the action undertaken by us in this area fully confirmed with the interests of the Russian Federation. The documents signed today are a result of joint effort of the Minister of Defense and Chiefs of Staff and our Minister of Foreign Affairs, of course, jointly with our American colleagues. And we proceed from the assumption we have today, and we try to forecast the status of affairs in the world for a lengthy period of time—I would like to point out, again, for a lengthy perspective.

Now, as regards the question of verification and control, perhaps, I'd like to point out that we're very much satisfied with the U.S. administration approach to this question. Our American partners have agreed that we need to retain START I, which is provided for by the system of verification. We agreed we will continue this work on the basis of the documents signed today as well.

And what was the second part of the question, incidentally? The mike was off at this time. Regarding those targets, that was not to me. I will also make a remark here, regarding aiming targets. And Mr. Baluyevskiy, our military First Deputy Chief of Staff, is here with us. He and his American counterpart are full aware of

those things, targeting aims and other things involved, and what is the status today of those aimings and targeting. All in speculations in the press are nothing but expression of domestic political infight either here or in the U.S., just on the verge of the visit.

We are not being emotional here. We're not talking to the press, but as experts, we're full aware of that, and we have no concern whatsoever in this regard.

Thank you. Thank you for your kind attention and for your participation.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 12:55 p.m. in St. Andrew's Hall at the Kremlin. President Putin spoke in Russian, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. In his remarks, President Bush referred to the Jackson-Vanik amendment, which placed restrictions on normalized trade relations between the U.S. and Russia and other countries of the former Soviet Union based on their economic structure and emigration policies. President Putin referred to Gen.-Col. Yuriy Nikolayevich Baluyevskiy, First Deputy Chief of the General Staff, Russian Federation Armed Forces. Prior to their news conference, President Bush and President Putin signed the Treaty Between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Strategic Offensive Reductions.

Treaty Between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Strategic Offensive Reductions *May 24, 2002*

The United States of America and the Russian Federation, hereinafter referred to as the Parties,

Embarking upon the path of new relations for a new century and committed to the goal of strengthening their relationship through cooperation and friendship,

Believing that new global challenges and threats require the building of a qualitatively new foundation for strategic relations between the Parties,

Desiring to establish a genuine partnership based on the principles of mutual security, cooperation, trust, openness, and predictability,